

marked in the facsimile with more strength, could readily be copied by the eye.

There is another thing worthy of being noticed, which is, that after a few days' work, we discovered that when the sun was descending in the west, a palpable shadow was thrown into the letter, from which great assistance was derived, no doubtful letter has been admitted in the facsimile sent for your supervision, and it may be fairly doubted whether you will ever get a better or more honest copy.

As to the character in which the inscription is written, speaking from a very limited knowledge of the subject, my opinion the very first day, was, that it is in the ancient Ceylonese, or Páli; but as you have lately, with great perseverance and deserved success, made plain inscriptions hitherto perfectly a dead letter, I have great hopes you will be able to make something out of this celebrated stone of *Singapore*.

I may as well mention that tradition among the *Malays*, point to *Telinga* and *Ceylon* as its origin, which may be seen more at length in LEYDEN'S *Malayan Annals*.

W. BLAND."

V.—*Note on the Primary language of the Buddhist writings.* By  
B. H. HODGSON, Esq. Resident in Nipal.

To the Editor, Journal As. Soc.

I have read article II. of the 66th No. of your Journal with great interest. With regard to the language in which the religion of SA'KYA, 'was preached and spread among the people,' I perceive nothing opposed to my own opinions in the fact that that language was the vernacular.

There is merely in your case, as priorly in that of Mr. TURNOUR, some misapprehension of the sense in which I spoke to that point.

The preaching and spreading of the religion is a very different thing from the elaboration of those speculative principles from which the religion was deduced. In the one case, the appeal would be to the many; in the other, to the few. And whilst I am satisfied that the Buddhists as practical reformers addressed themselves to the people, and as propagandists used the vulgar tongue, I think that those philosophical dogmata which formed the basis of the popular creed, were enounced, defended and systematised in Sanskrit. I never alleged that the Buddhists had eschewed the Prákrits: I only denied the allegation that they had eschewed the Sanskrit; and I endeavoured, at the same time, to reconcile their use of *both*, by drawing a

distinction between the means employed by their philosophers to establish the principles of this religion, and the means employed by their missionaries to propagate the religion itself.

JOINVILLE had argued that Buddhism was an original creed, older than Brahmanism, because of the grossness of its leading tenets which savour so much of 'flat atheism.'

I answered that Buddhism was an innovation on the existing creed, and that all the peculiarities of the religion of SA'KYA could be best and only explained by advertence to shameful *prior abuse* of the *religious sanction*, whence arose the characteristic *Bauddha* aversion to gods and priests, and that enthusiastic self-reliance taught by Buddhism in express opposition to the servile extant reference of all things to heavenly and earthly mediation. JONES, again, had argued that the Buddhists used only the Prákrit because the books of *Ceylon* and *Ava*, (the only ones then forthcoming\*,) were solely in that language or dialect. I answered by producing a whole library of Sanskrit works in which the principles of Buddhism are more fully expounded than in all the legendary tomes of *Ceylon* and *Ava*; I answered, further, by pointing to the abstruse philosophy of Buddhism, to the admitted pre-eminence, as *scholars*, of its expounders; and to their location in the most central and literary part of India (*Behar* and *Oude*). With the Sanskrit at command; I asked and ask again, *why* men so placed and gifted, and having to defend their principles in the schools against ripe *scholars* from all parts of India (for those were days of high debate and of perpetual formal disputation in palaces and in cloisters) should be supposed to have resorted to a limited and feebler organ when they had the universal and more powerful one equally available? The presumption that they did *not* thus postpone Sanskrit to Prákrit is, in my judgment, worth a score of any inferences deducible from monumental slabs, backed as this presumption is by the Sanskrit records of Buddhism discovered here. Those records came direct from the proximate head-quarters of Buddhism. And, if the principles of this creed were not expounded and systematised in the schools of India in Sanskrit, what are we to make of the Nepálese originals and of the avowed Tibetan translations? In my judgment the *extent* and *character* of these works settle the question that the philosophic founders of Buddhism used Sanskrit and Sanskrit only, to expound, defend and record the speculative principles of their system,

\* Sir W. JONES had, however, in his possession a Sanskrit copy of the *Lalita Vistara*, and had noticed the personification of Diva Natura under the style of Arya Tara.

principles without which the vulgar creed would be (for us), mere leather and prunella! Nor is this opinion in the least opposed to your notion (mine too) that the *practical system of belief*, deduced from those principles, was spread among the people of the spot as well as propagated to remoter spots by means of the vernacular.

It is admitted that Buddhism was long taught in *Ceylon* without the aid of books: and that the first book reached that island nearly 300 years after the introduction of the creed.

Here is a distinct admission of what I long since inferred from the general character of the religion of ΣΑ'ΚΥΑ in that island, viz. the protracted total want, and ultimate imperfect supply, of those standard written authorities of the sect which regulated belief and practice in *Magadha*, *Kosala* and *Rājagriha*,—in a word, in the *Metropolis of Buddhism*. From this metropolis the authorities in question were transferred directly and *immediately* to the *proximate hills of Nepál*, where and where only, I believe, they are now to be found. If not translations, the books of *Ceylon* have all the appearance of being ritual collectanea, legendary hearsays, and loose comments on received texts—all which would naturally be written in the vulgar tongue\*. To these, however, we must add some very important historical annals, detailing the spread and diffusion of Buddhism. Similar annals are yet found in Tibet, but, as far as I know not in *Nepál*, for what reason it is difficult to divine.

But these annals, however valuable to us, for historical uses, are not the original written standard of faith; and until I see the *Prajñá Páramita* and the nine *Dharmas*† produced from *Ceylon*, I must continue of the opinion that the Buddhists of that island drew their faith from secondary, not primary sources; and that whilst the former were in *Ceylon* as elsewhere, vernacular; the latter were in *Magadha* and *Kosala*, as they are still in *Nepál*, classical or Sanskrit!

Certainly Buddhism, considered in the practical view of a religious system, always appealed to the common sense and interest of the many, inscribing its most sacred texts (Sanskrit and Prákrit) on temple walls and on pillars, placed in market, high-road and cross-road.

\* Such works written in the vulgar tongue are common in *Nepál* and frequently we have a Sanskrit text with a vernacular running commentary.

† They have one of the 9, viz., the *Lallita Vistara*; but M. BURNOUR assures me, in a miserably corrupted state. Now, as this work is forthcoming in a faultless state in Sanskrit, I say the Páli version *must* be a translation. (Await Mr. TURNOUR's extracts and translations before pronouncing judgment.—ED.)

This material fact (so opposite to the genius of Brahmanism), I long since called attention to; and thence argued that the inscriptions on the láts would be probably found to be scriptural texts!

The tendency of your researches to prove that the elaborate forms of the Deva Nágari were constructed from simpler elements, more or less appropriated to the popular Bháshás, is very curious; and seems to strengthen the opinion of those who hold Hindí to be indigenous, older than Sanskrit in India, and not (as COLEBROOKE supposed) deduced from Sanskrit. If Buddhism used these primitive letters before the Deva Nágari existed, the date of this creed would seem to be thrown back to a remote æra, or, the Sanskrit letters and language must be comparatively recent.

I can trace something *very like* Buddhism into far ages and realms; but I am sure that that Buddhism which has come down to us in the Sanskrit, Páli and Tibetan books of the sect, and which only therefore we do or can *know*, is neither old nor exotic. *That* Buddhism (the doctrines of the so called *seventh* Buddha) arose in the middle of India in comparatively recent times, and expressly out of those prior abominations which had long held the people of India in cruel vassalage to a bloated priesthood.

The race of *Sáka*, or progenitors of *Sákya Sinha* (by the way, the *Sinha* proves that the princely style was given to him until he assumed the ascetic habit) may have been Scythians or Northmen, in one sense; and so probably were the Brahmins in that same sense, viz. with reference to their original seat. (Brachmanes nomen gentis diffusissimæ, cujus maxima pars in montibus degit; reliqui circa Gangem.)

If one's purpose and object were to search backwards to the original hive of nations, one might, as in consistency one should, draw Brahmanism and Buddhism, VYA'SA and SA'KYA, from Tartary. All I say is, that quoad the known and recorded man and thing—SA'KYA SINHA and his tenets—they are indisputably Indian and recent\*.

I incline to the opinion that Hindí may be older in India than Sanskrit, and independent, originally, of Sanskrit. But were this so, and were it also true that the Buddhists used the best dialect of Hindí (*that* however is saturated with Sanskrit, whatever its primal independence) such admissions would rather strengthen than weaken the argument from language against the exotic origin of Buddhism†.

\* According to all Baudha authorities the lineage of the whole seven mortal Buddhas is expressly stated to be Brahmanical or Kshetriya! What is the answer to this?

† Our own distinguished WILSON has too easily followed the continental Eu-

According to this hypothesis, Hindí is not less, but more, Indian than Sanskrit : and, *à fortiori*, so is the religion assumed to have committed its records to Hindí.

But, in very truth, the extant records of Buddhism, whether Sanskrit or Prákrit, exhibit both languages in a high state of refinement ; and though one or both tongues came originally from Tartary, they received that refinement in India, where, certainly, what *we know* as Buddhism, (by means of these records) had its origin, long after Brahmanism had flourished there in all its mischievous might.

P. S. You will, I hope, excuse my having adverted to some other controverted topics besides that which your paper immediately suggested. These questions are, a good deal, linked together : for instance, if Buddhism furnishes *internal* evidence throughout its most authentic records that it is the express antithesis of Brahmanism, its posteriority of date to the latter is decided, *as well as its jealousy of priestly pretensions*. *Nec clericis infinita aut libera potestas*, is a deduction which only very precise and weighty evidence will suffice to set aside : I have seen none such yet from *Ceylon* or from *Ava*. And be it observed I here advert to authentic scriptural tenets, and not to popular corruptions resulting from the facile confusion of the ascetic with the clerical profession.

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NOTE. We are by no means prepared to enter into a controversy on a subject on which we profess but a slight and accidental acquaintance : nor will we arrogate to ourselves the distinction of having entered the lists already occupied by such champions as Mr. HODGSON and Mr. TURNOUR, who have both very strong arguments to bring forward, in support of their opposite views. As far as the *Dharmalipi* could be taken as evidence the vernacularists had the right to it ; but on the other hand there can be no doubt, as Mr. HODGSON says, that all scholastic disputation with the existing Brahmanical schools which SA'KYA personally visited and overcame, must have been conducted in the classical language. The only question is, whether any of these early disquisitions have been preserved, and whether, for example, the Life of SA'KYA, called the *Lalita Vistára*, found by Professor WILSON to agree verbatim with the Tibetan translate examined simultaneously by Mr. CSOMA, has a greater antiquity than the *Pitakattayan* of *Ceylon* ? We happen fortuitously to have received at this moment two letters bearing upon the point in dispute from which we ropean writers in identifying the *Sáka vansa* with the classical Sacæ or Scythians, and Buddhism with Samanism. The Tartars of our day avow that they got all their knowledge from India : teste *Kahgyur et Stangyur*.

gladly avail ourselves of an extract or two :—MR. TURNOUR, alluding to the notice of the life of SA'KYA from the Tibetan authorities by Mr. CSOMĀ in the *As. Res.* Vol. XX. writes—"The Tibetan life is apparently a very meagre performance, containing scarcely any thing valuable in the department of history ; whereas had the materials whence it was taken been genuine, the translator would have been able to bring forward and illustrate much valuable information on the pilgrimages and the acts of SA'KYA in various parts of India during the 45 years he was *Buddha*. Even the superstitious facts recorded are much more absurd than they are represented in the *Pitakattayan*. Thus the *dream* of MĀYĀ DEVĪ of having been rubbed by a *Chhadanta* elephant, during her pregnancy,—is converted into a matter of fact, of SĀKYA, 'in the form of an elephant having entered by the right side into the womb or cavity of the body of MĀYĀ DEVĪ!' '*Chhadanta*' is taken literally as a *six-tusked* elephant, whereas by our books *Chhadanta* is the name of a lake beyond the *Himālaya* mountains where the elephants are of a superior breed. It is mentioned twice in the *Mahāwanso* (Chaps. 5 and 22)."

If the rationality of a story be a fair test of its genuineness, which few will deny, the *Pāli* record will here bear away the palm :—but it is much to be regretted that we have not a complete translation of the Sanskrit and of the Ceylonese "life" to place side by side. It is impossible that instruction should not be gained by such an impartial examination\*. But to return to the subject under discussion ; my friend Mr. CSOMĀ writes from *Titalya* in the *Purniya* district :—

\* As an example of the information already obtained from Mr. Csoma's translated sketch, we may adduce the origin of the custom seemingly so universal among the Buddhists of preserving pictorial or sculptured representations of the facts of his life.—After his death the priests and minister at *Rājagriha* are afraid of telling the king AJATA SATRU thereof lest he should faint from the shock, and it is suggested by MAHA'KASHYAPA by way of breaking the intelligence to him, that the *Mahāmantra* or chief priest should "go speedily into the king's garden, and cause to be represented in painting, how CHOMDANDAS (*Bhagavān*) was in *Tushitā* : how in the shape of an elephant he entered his mother's womb : how at the foot of the holy fig-tree he attained supreme perfection : how at *Vārānāsī* he turned the wheel of the law of twelve kinds, (taught his doctrines :)—how he at *Sravastī* displayed great miracles ;—how at the city of *Ghachen* he descended from the *Traya Strinsha* heaven, whither he had gone to instruct his mother :—and lastly how having accomplished his acts in civilizing and instructing men in his doctrine at several places, he went to his last repose in the city of *Kusha* in *Assam*." Now whether the book in question was written sooner or later, it explains the practice equally and teaches us how we may successfully analyze the events depicted in the drawings of *Adjanta*, perchance, or the sculp-

“ In reference to your and Mr. TURNOUR’s opinion that the original records of the Buddhists in ancient India, were written in the *Mágadhí* dialect, I beg leave to add in support of it, that in the index or register (རྟུལ་ཆེན་ *dkar-chhag*) of the *Kahgyur*, it is stated that the *Sútras* in general—i. e. all the works in the *Kahgyur* except the 21 volumes of the *Sher-chhin* and the 22 volumes of the *rGyud* ཐུད་ class, after the death of SHÁKYA, were first written in the *Sindhu* language and the *Sher-chhin* and *rGyud* in the Sanskrit: but part of the *rGyud* also in several other corrupt dialects. It is probable that in the seventh century and afterwards, the ancient Buddhistic religion was remodelled and generally written in Sanskrit, before the Tibetans commenced its introduction by translation into their own country.”

This explanation, so simple and so authentic, ought to set the matter at rest, and that in the manner that the advocates of either view should most desire, for it shews that both are right!—It is generally allowed that the *Páli* and the *Zend* are derivatives of nearly the same grade from the Sanskrit stock; and the modern dialect of *Sinde* as well as the *Bhāshá* of upper and western India present more striking analogies to the *Páli*, in the removal particularly of the *r*, and the modification of the auxiliary verbs, than any of the dialects of *Bengal*, *Behar*, or *Ceylon*\*. Plausible grounds for the existence of this western dialect in the heart of *Magadha*, and the preference given it in writings of the period, may be found in the origin of the ruling dynasty of that province, which had confessedly proceeded from the north-west. At any rate those of the *Sákya* race, which had emigrated from *Sinde* to *Kapila vastu* (somewhere in the *Gangetic* valley) may have preserved the idiom of this native province and have caused it to prevail along with the religion which was promulgated through its means.

We are by no means of opinion that the *Hindí*, *Sindhí*, or *Páli* had an independent origin prior to the *Sanskrit*. The more the first of these, which is the most modern form and the farthest removed from the classical language, is examined and analyzed, the more evidently is its modification and corruption from the ancient stock found to follow systematic rules, and to evince rather provincial dialectism (if I may use the word) than the mere engraftment of foreign words upon a pre-existent and written language. The aboriginal terms of

tures of *Bhilsa*, with a full volume of the life of SHÁKYA in our hand. Similar paintings are common in *Ava*, and an amusing, but rather apocryphal, series may be seen in UPHAM’s folio history of Buddhism.

\* See the Rev. Dr. MILL’s note on this subject in the *J. A. S.* Vol. V. p. 30; also Professor WILSON’s remarks, Vol. I. page 8.

Indian speech must be rather sought in the hills and in the peninsula ; in the plains and populous districts of the north the evidences of their existence are necessarily smothered by the predominance of the refined and durable languages of the court, of religion, and of the educated classes. A writer in the *Foreign Quarterly* has lately been bold enough to revive the theory of Sanskrit being merely a derivative from the Greek through the intervention of the Zend, and subsequent to the Macedonian invasion ! The Agathocles' coin ought to answer all such speculations. The *Pill* of that day along with its appropriate symbols is proved to have held the same precise derivative relation to the Sanskrit as it does now—for the records on which we argue are not modern, but of that very period. All we still want is to find some graven Brahmanical record of the same period to shew the character then in use for writing Sanskrit ; and to add ocular demonstration to the proofs afforded by the profound researches of philologists as to the genuine antiquity of the venerable depository of the Vedas.—ED.

VI.—*Geometric Tortoises*, “*Testudo Geometrica.*” By Lieut. T. HUTTON,  
37th Native Infantry.

*Africa* being as yet the only recorded habitat of the Geometric Tortoise, I have thought it advisable to make known the existence of these animals in the hilly tracts of *Meywar*, and the adjoining districts, where they are found in the high grassy jaunglas, skirting the base of the hills, and are by no means of rare occurrence.

I usually employed a few Bheels to seek for them, who thought themselves well paid with a pint of brandy for a pair of Tortoises. Although not uncommon, they are nevertheless not easily procured, owing to their color and appearance being so blended with the rocky nature of the ground, as to render it difficult to distinguish them from surrounding objects ; added to which, they remain in concealment, beneath shrubs or tufts of grass during the heat of the day.

The Bheels, however, are expert in tracking them through loose soils, and having discovered a foot print in the sand of a nullah, or the dust of the grass plains, they generally succeed in capturing the animal, by patiently following the traces it has left.

It is during the rainy season that they are in the greatest activity and wander about all day, feeding and coupling. At the approach of the cold weather they select a sheltered spot and conceal themselves by thrusting their shell into some thick tuft of grass and bushes, the better to protect them from the cold, remaining thus in a sort of